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**I WANT YOU**  
**FOR the C.I.A.**

Illustration by Michael Carroll

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# 'The Company' has jobs for grads

By Lee Michael Katz

**L**YNCHBURG, Va.—Among the 50% college students at the Challenge '84 job fair, D.J. Emanuelson, 20, an economics and French major from Washington and Lee University, wearing a blue suit and a "Yes, Ma'am" demeanor, is a hot prospect.

Recruiter Cecelia Velar Walker is spending a tiring morning 170 miles from her home office, fielding questions from waves of students who know virtually nothing about her firm except that it is hiring.

When Emanuelson approaches with a delicious list of analytical and language skills, Walker, whose powerful international organization is known simply as "the Company," breaks into the guarded smile of a major league baseball scout who has discovered a young Fernando Valenzuela in a sandlot game.

"You in all probability would make a great candidate for our career training program," Walker says. Call her anytime. Collect.

At a small table between the C&P Telephone Co. and the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Walker, an attractive, middle-aged woman who refuses to permit her photograph to be taken, sits under a "Central Intelligence Agency" sign searching for the spies of tomorrow.

Trying to downplay the James Bond stereotype, she repeats in a monotone a standard speech designed to cut off the questions about karate training: "We are an overseas intelligence-gathering agency . . ."

Although D.J.'s last brush with danger was a fraternity toga party that lasted until 4 a.m., he believes that the CIA "might be a lot of fun."

"I think there's a lot of subversion and things going on in other countries," he says.

IN THE pragmatic 1980s, CIA recruiters are welcomed with open arms on college campuses because they offer coveted jobs that start in the \$20,000 range.

John Doering, the CIA's director of recruiting, recalls a recent trip to California: "I was at the CIA table for three days. I didn't even get a chance to go to the men's room. They were all lined up."

The CIA attracts a broad range of applicants.

"We get people in prison who say to us, 'I'll knock off Chernenko,'" Doering says. "Naturally, we're not interested in these types of people. You just send them a little note saying, 'Thanks, but no thanks.'"

CIA applicants face an extensive background check, a battery of written psychological tests and a frightening bout with a lie detector. An experienced polygraph operator will ask questions about homosexual experiences and drug use. Recruiter Walker assures students that experimentation with marijuana would not necessarily disqualify them.

The stereotypical CIA officer is an Ivy League WASP, such as Vice President George Bush, who once headed the agency; but former CIA director William Colby insists that the Ivy image went out "about 20 years ago."

A survey within the agency showed graduates of 120 universities serving as foreign officers, Doering says. The leading college was not Harvard or Yale but Georgetown University. The CIA does recruit at Harvard Business School, but "it's hard as hell to compete with people who are paying more than you are," says CIA spokesman Chuck Wilson.

"We have to sell what we are, but we don't get all of the best," Doering adds.

THE CIA attempts to bring in gifted students and teachers by offering summer internships and visiting fellowships. The agency can offer enough covert research sources to boggle a researcher's mind.

"We have a lot of professors here," Wilson says, "because they have access to specific information they'd never get elsewhere."

A military background is a plus because it usually indicates loyalty and overseas travel. Language capability is crucial, for the obvious reason that the CIA officer can get along better in a foreign land if he speaks the language.

A decade or two ago the agency decided to offer a financial incentive, "sort of on a piecework basis," recalls Ed Harris, a retired 31-year CIA veteran. The bonus was about \$100 a language, substantial money in those days. One spy with a great affinity for languages quickly mastered 16 foreign dialects and broke the language bonus bank.

THE ARDUOUS training encompasses many details of a spy's "trade craft." Some guileless recruits find their skills are better used in a desk job after the training brings out the moral quandries of being a spy.

Harris recalls a training mistake that almost sent him packing before he started his career. The novice

officers were studying blackmail techniques by role playing. With incriminating documents in hand, Harris came up to the target, played by a veteran officer, and said, "Mr. X, I've got the goods on you."

The older man calmly reached over, grabbed the papers and ate them. "So what?" he replied.

Harris hadn't yet learned the spy's art of coolness under pressure: "I didn't know I was supposed to tell him they were only Xerox copies."

CIA OFFICIALS are quick to emphasize that intelligence work does not imitate the movies.

"The American intelligence officer does not leap over the wall of the Kremlin and vault into the Politburo's headquarters," Colby says. "He finds a Soviet citizen and convinces him that it's in the best interests of his country and mankind" to pass Russian secrets to the Americans.

After talking with Colby and other intelligence hands, one could conclude that the ideal officer would possess the acquisitive skills of John D. Rockefeller, the fatherly image of Marcus Welby, the psychological insights of Sigmund Freud and, above all, the persuasiveness of Dale Carnegie.

"It's what a good salesman does, a good father does and a good technician does," Colby says.

"If you want to be exact," Harris says, "it's being a good master of spies." An American overseas officer manages a local team of spies who are the real agents. "He has to be a good assessor and manipulator of people. Sometimes it's outright recruitment."

FOREIGN AGENTS are cleared through CIA headquarters in McLean, Va., outside Washington. Most are paid in cash by the coordinating American spy, preferably through indirect methods.

At times, the payments are not in currency. An American intelligence officer may rent a luxurious hotel room for a cooperative local businessman and his mistress to use for assignments.

"I had a lot of friends in foreign countries, businessmen who knew who I was and were quite willing to work with me and didn't get a penny for their pains," Harris says.

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"With him [a businessman], you're dealing as you would with any civilized person. You buy him dinner, you send him drinks, presents at Christmas, you remember his name. If you do that well, you're an outstanding agent."

Legendary American spies usually are legendary recruiters.

"I've seen a lot of snake oil salesmen," says a CIA employee, laughing.

**THEIR TARGETS** range from a janitor in a foreign government building to the ultimate: a Kremlin agent who secretly can feed information to the Americans.

Harris says that one of his colleagues possessed a "magic touch," enabling him to recruit almost anything that moved to spy for the Americans.

Everywhere he went he recruited people, Harris notes. Once on a dare the legendary officer convinced an African taxi driver to funnel information to the CIA, in the time it took to ride from the airport to his hotel.

CIA officers map out targets and figure out ways to approach them without revealing their mission.

"You have to be able to provide a plausible denial" for State Department officials in foreign lands if the approach surfaces, a former CIA officer says.

**WHILE THE** recruiting process may begin simply as a conversation at an embassy party, some approaches are ingenious. Colby recalls an agent who befriended his quarry through repeated visits to a foreign steam bath.

Another time a CIA officer, driving along a lonely road in an underdeveloped country, stopped to help a stranded motorist fix a flat. The motorist proved to be an influential citizen, and the officer "struck up an acquaintance that provided us with some important information," Colby says.

On occasion the accidents are planned. One American officer eager to run into his target decided he couldn't wait any longer.

"He literally got to meet his target by smashing his car into the target's car," a former officer marvels. "He left a note saying he did it and would be around the next day to compensate for it."

**SOME SOURCES** of information are unlikely. A socialist, for example, might cooperate with the CIA because he doesn't like the communists, even though his ideology is much closer to the Soviet Union's than it is to America's. An American officer gained valuable information by passing himself off as a member of a Maoist splinter group in Italy.

A capable spy must inspire confidence, but sometimes officers get so close to their agents that they are said to be "in love" with them. This could turn out to be tricky if there actually is a double operation and the agent turns out to be a foreign spy feeding the United States bogus information.

"An intelligence officer is constantly assessing his agents," says the former spy, who worked under deep cover in spots from Brazil to Japan. "A good intelligence officer will try to keep his distance and maintain as much objectivity as possible" when reporting back to the home office in McLean.

"Here's where the schizophrenia develops," the ex-agent says. "Someone who wears his feelings on his sleeve might find it difficult to maintain a Jekyll and Hyde relationship."

**THE COMPANY** expects lifetime devotion from those who go through its expensive clandestine training. More than 90 percent of CIA employees stay with the agency for more than 25 years.

An intelligence officer also must be content to serve without outside recognition for his efforts, a point explored with prospective spies by agency psychologists. Often a field operative is given a medal in a secret ceremony. After a few minutes the paperwork is burned and, to protect his cover, the officer must relinquish the medal for which he may have risked his life.

As Walker told a group of students in Lynchburg: "If you're the type of person who can't resist coming home and saying, 'Guess what I did at the office today,' this work probably isn't for you."

Words by Wire

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AP Laserphoto

In 1967, students at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee campus, protested CIA job recruitment.